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Product Code A0810-SP

MOTHERS, DAUGHTERS AND THE SPACE BETWEEN

By Beth Dotson Brown

A COLLECTION OF THREE SHORT PLAYS

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MOTHERS, DAUGHTERS AND THE SPACE BETWEEN

By Beth Dotson Brown

A COLLECTION OF THREE SHORT PLAYS

BLOOD ON THE HIGHWAY

Setting: *An undeveloped stretch of highway.*

Characters; *1 man/1 woman;*

Ella; Mother of Emmalina, who has been killed in an accident on the highway
Edmund; Emmalina's younger brother, a young teenager.

MOTHERHOOD UNBIDDEN

Setting: *A dining room in a middle class home.*

Characters; *1 man/3 women:*

Grace Kinkaid; *a nervous woman in her late 30s or 40s who is recently married and uncomfortable in her role as stepmother.*

Agnes Kinkaid; *the 19-year-old stepdaughter who lives away at college. She comes home once a week for a family meal and doesn't like Grace.*

Benny Kinkaid; *the stepson in his early 20s who lives in town and has a good relationship with Grace.*

Kimberly LaCoyne; *Benny's girlfriend who recently graduated from high school and is somewhat immature.*

STRANGER ON THE PORCH

Setting: *The porch of a middle class house in a small, Midwestern town in the 1970s.*

Characters; *1 man/2 women:*

Abby Kanapple; *Keith's wife of 20 years. A fading beauty who is not content with her life. For years she got what she wanted because of her looks; didn't attend college but learned to keep the books for Keith. She strives to make things better by almost constant cleaning.*

Keith Kanapple; *A former traveling salesman who settled down with the beauty Abby and is still happy to call her his wife. He's content to work a little during the days and spend his evenings watching television.*

Emma Lowery; *A young woman who shows up at their house.*

BLOOD ON THE HIGHWAY

By Beth Dotson Brown

A SHORT PLAY

(At rise: The sound of a car coming to a stop, the engine out and a car door opening. After a long pause the door shuts. Ella enters carrying some cardboard, a paint brush and florescent paint.)

ELLA

Come on Edmund. It's time to get to work. *(Sounds of cars and trucks driving by.)* Edmund, now! *(A car door opens and closes. EDMUND enters. ELLA hands him the cardboard and paint.)* Here, Edmund. It should say: "Lane closed ahead."

EDMUND

No, Ma. This too dangerous. We're not road workers. They won't see us.

ELLA

Like they didn't see Emmalina? *(EDMUND looks at his feet.)* You'll do this for your sister. *(EDMUND picks up the sign and nods his head yes. ELLA exits as EDMUND sets to work. She re-enters several times, first carrying jugs of water, along with scouring pads and a new bottle of bleach. She puts them on the pavement next to a large, dark spot. Next, she enters with pots of lilacs and lines them up around the spot like road cones.)*

EDMUND

(EDMUND looks up briefly.) Ma, you couldn't get something better than that? No one will see them.

ELLA

They are your sister's favorite flowers. They will protect us. *(EDMUND shakes his head no and rolls his eyes. He holds the sign up to show his mother.)*

EDMUND

How's this?

ELLA

Very good. *(Sound of a car speeding by.)*

EDMUND

(Pleading.) Ma, it's not safe. You can't do this.

ELLA

Life is not safe, Edmund. It is not. We cannot change that. But we can change this, and we will. We will not leave Emmalina lying here. *(A truck goes by and blows its horn.)*

EDMUND

See that, ma. They won't see us!

ELLA

(Calm.) They will. You will stand down there just off the road with the sign, then I'll place the pots further in the lane to show it is closed.

EDMUND

What if they don't pay attention?

ELLA

(Irritated.) I'll put the flashers on in the car. They'll see it. *(EDMUND still looks worried. ELLA's expression softens and she walks over to him and puts her arms around him as best she can while he is holding the sign. When she pulls back, he wipes away tears.)*

EDMUND

Please be careful, Ma.

ELLA

You, too. *(EDMUND goes to hold up the sign at one side of the stage. ELLA goes to the spot with the cleaning equipment.)*

ELLA

(She looks at the spot, then the gloves, which she discards on the pavement. She opens the bleach and a jug of water.) Oh, my little girl. My Emmalina. . . Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou, among women, and blessed is the fruit . . .

EDMUND

(Looking at the sky.) Papa, where are you? We need you now. You see, there was an accident, with Emmalina. And this is the place. I always thought it was the road out of this stinking little town, the road to the rest of the world. She did, too. But not now. Now it's the road to the end of the world. We need you. Couldn't you please come back? This would be a really good time for you to show up.

ELLA

(Scrubbing.) Now, Emmalina. You were always a good girl. All of your teachers liked you. You went to church with me on Sundays. You were nice to your brother, *(smiling)* most of the time. So I don't think you have to worry. God will watch over you. Do not worry about it. *(Pause)* Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee . . .

EDMUND

(Glances over at his mother.) Papa, she has been praying since she got the telephone call from the hospital. She dropped the phone and ran out the door saying the Hail Mary. And ever since, she keeps praying, and talking to her. I'm worried about Ma.

ELLA

And I was always there for you Emmalina. I went to work at your school when you started so I could be near you. I took you to your friends' houses when you asked. I picked you up when you had rehearsals after school. *(Pause)* I know he left us and it hurt you, but

ELLA, *Continued*

believe me, it was for the better. Oh, he loved us all at one time. But he disappeared before he ever left us. I was not going to let him spend our grocery money on his bottles. Nor was I going to let him yell at you when he was in one of his rages. So I changed the locks. I know it hurt you when he didn't come back. But I did it because I loved you, and Edmund. All your father ever left us was black scuff marks on the door from when he tried to kick it down with his boots. *(She stops scrubbing and looks over at Edmund, listening to him.)*

EDMUND

Papa, she tried. Ma has tried so hard to be good to us, to be mother and father at the same time. She really yelled once in awhile, wouldn't cut us a break at all. Sometimes it's been like being in the Army, but I guess she thought it was best. But it's not. What we need is you. We needed you then, and we really need you now. Papa . . .

ELLA

Edmund, your papa . . . I shouldn't have given him the car keys. I guess I was thinking that blue Impala was plenty big enough for him to sleep in. But with keys, you can also drive it. *(She returns to scrubbing.)* Hail Mary, full of grace . . .

EDMUND

Papa, I'm afraid for her. She's really lost it. She said we had to come out here so she could wash Emmalina's blood from the highway. It's crazy. Emmalina is gone. She's not here. But Ma says she is. *(He cries.)*

ELLA

(Ella scrubs furiously.) To heaven, my child. To the angels you go. Mother Mary will protect you. She will take you to her son Jesus, who will be standing at the gate to welcome you.

EDMUND

Papa, I went with her to see the undertaker. I was afraid of how she would act if she went alone. He told her that, that Emmalina's hair was so clumped together with blood, in the back, where she got hit, I guess, that they had to cut it off.

ELLA

But she'll still be beautiful in the casket. She will.

EDMUND

She screamed, papa. Not at the man, maybe at God, I don't know. She just screamed. But she didn't cry. I haven't seen her cry yet. *(Loud noise of truck going by and honking. One of the pots falls over and breaks. EDMUND jogs over and ELLA walks, both meeting at the broken pot.)*

EDMUND

(Pointing.) That car hit it.

ELLA

(Clenches her teeth as she stares after the car and mutters.) It was a blue car. An Impala?

EDMUND

(Looking after it.) Papa?

ELLA

(Mumbling and staring down the road.) A blue car. They said it was a blue car.

EDMUND

Ma, what are you talking about? There are hundreds of blue cars.

ELLA

The one that got your sister. They said it was blue. *(Sound of truck horn and wind.)*

EDMUND

It's not safe, Ma. Let's go!

ELLA

Not yet! I have to wash away the blood. Emmalina has to be free from this suffering so she can ascend to be with the angels. This is the only way! *(ELLA runs back to her scrubbing job and EDMUND looks after her, then goes back to hold up his sign.)*

EDMUND

Papa? Are you there, somewhere, anywhere? It's been years . . . I'm almost a man now. *(Pause, then whispering.)* Do you still drive that blue Impala? *(ELLA kneels down and pours a lot of bleach onto the spot. She scrubs furiously.)*

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes

CONTINUE TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR THE SECOND PLAY IN THE COLLECTION

MOTHERHOOD UNBIDDEN

By Beth Dotson Brown

A SHORT PLAY

(At rise: Grace is setting the dining room table. Agnes walks in.)

AGNES

What's for supper tonight, Grace?

GRACE

(She says this almost as a question, as if seeking approval.) Lasagna. With salad, rolls and a chocolate pudding cake for dessert.

AGNES

(To herself) Lasagna. Again.

GRACE

(She hears Agnes' comment but doesn't acknowledge it, just busies herself with the table. As they talk, she has a nervous habit of pressing her fingernails into the flesh of her arm.) Benny will be here with his new girlfriend, Kimberly. You haven't met her yet, have you Agnes?

AGNES

No, but Dad tells me she's a boppity little teenager. Benny needs a woman.

GRACE

Why do you say that?

AGNES

Why do I say what?

GRACE

That Benny needs a woman.

AGNES

Because he's a slob and he's so unfocussed and just generally doesn't know what the heck is going on in life. He doesn't need some teenager who hangs out at the mall and giggles with her friends. He needs a woman.

GRACE

Your brother is an intelligent young man. We'll have to rely on him to make good decisions.

AGNES

(Sarcastic) Rely on him to make good decisions. Right!

GRACE

How were classes this week, Agnes?

AGNES

Classes. Challenging I would say. But the drive here was more so. I wish they would finish that road construction so I don't have to drive through it every week when I come down.

GRACE

Then I hope they'll finish it soon.

AGNES

Yeah, right. Listen, Grace, since Dad's not home yet I'm going next door to see if Gina is there. She used to be a good friend of mine. Not that you would know that since you're so new to the family, but she is.

GRACE

(Nods and begins to pace. Agnes exits.) How am I ever going to connect with that girl? Is there something wrong with me? I wish Agnes didn't dislike me so much. But I don't think there's a thing I can do about it. She's as stubborn as her father. *(GRACE stops and smiles.)* But I was lucky there. He was stubborn about not giving up on me. *(She smiles at her hand with her wedding rings. Then she frowns.)* But maybe I was right and he was wrong. Maybe I can be his wife but not a good stepmother to his children. Nothing in my life has prepared me for someone like Agnes. *(BENNY and KIMBERLY walk in, their arms around one another.)*

BENNY

How's it going today, Grace?

GRACE

(Smiling at him fondly.) Fine. Very fine.

BENNY

(Walks over to give her a hug.) You remember Kimberly, don't you?

GRACE

Surely. Hello.

KIMBERLY

Hi Grace.

BENNY

Do you need some help, Grace? I might not cook but I know how to set a table.

GRACE

Oh, no, I'm fine here.

BENNY

Kimberly, do you want something to drink?

KIMBERLY

Yeah. (*BENNY exits.*)

GRACE

(*Setting the table then nervously moving the pieces around, looking more at them than at KIMBERLY.*) What is this job you told us you just started, Kimberly?

KIMBERLY

Officially, I'm a stock clerk at the store. But I'm hoping that soon I'll be a cashier, then I could have more people to talk to every day and I would like that.

GRACE

Are they giving you the training you need?

KIMBERLY

Oh, sure. They've been great about that. And they told me I did well the very first time I ran the cash register. I never thought I was good with numbers, but the machine does it all for me.

GRACE

Will you go to school in the fall? College?

KIMBERLY

No, I never really liked school. I mean, the friends were great and some of the stuff we got into, but studying is not something I'm in love with. Besides, I can make decent money at this job and maybe move up to be a store manager some day. Then after that, who knows.

GRACE

(*She stops to really look at KIMBERLY.*) What is it that you would really like to do, if you could have any job in the world?

KIMBERLY

(*Grinning.*) I would really like to be a choreographer for MTV. I mean, that would just be the ultimate I think. But, that's not likely to happen since I'm not planning to leave this place. So next in line is to get married. I would be an awesome wife.

GRACE

(*Swallows hard, disturbed by the wife goal*) So you're a dancer?

BENNY

(*He walks in and hands KIMBERLY a pop can.*) She's great. She was on the dance team in school and she's shown me some of her routines. I've never seen anyone dance like that. (*KIMBERLY giggles and kisses his cheek then whispers into his ear. GRACE looks down at the plates, embarrassed at their physical intimacy, and begins moving things again.*)

GRACE

I am sorry but I don't know much about dancing and MTV. Does that mean that if you went on to college you could study it further? Because with an education and some experience, maybe MTV wouldn't be just a dream.

KIMBERLY

I don't know. I think something like a zillion girls try out for college dance teams. And I don't think they let you major in it. So I'll just be content to stay here with Benny and if it happens in the future, then it does.

BENNY

Grace, I'm really sorry but we need to check something out before supper and we sure don't want to miss your lasagna. It smells awesome!

GRACE

(Smiling at him.) That's okay. You go. *(BENNY and KIMBERLY exit. GRACE goes back to working on the table.)* The lasagna will be ready *(she looks at her watch)* soon. The salad and bread are prepared. The dessert is in the refrigerator. I could get out some salad dressings, but I don't know what Agnes will like. *(She starts to pick at her fingernails.)* She doesn't seem to like anything I do or say. If only she were more like Benny. He makes it easy to be a new mom at my age. But Agnes, goodness, I know she's 19 and maybe not quite as mature as Benny, but she's so hard to get to know. *(GRACE fluffs the flowers on the table and hums to herself. BENNY comes to the doorway of the room.)*

BENNY

(Unsmiling, very sober. He stands on the other side of the room from her.) Grace, something's happened. *(GRACE begins to move toward him and he puts up his hand and shakes his head no, looking at the ground.)* No, I have to go out. I just . . . I don't know... Kimberly will tell you. *(KIMBERLY walks in from behind BENNY and he leaves. KIMBERLY looks like she's been crying.)*

GRACE

Come in, please, Kimberly. Is something the matter?

KIMBERLY

(She pulls in a couple of jagged breaths before she looks at GRACE.) It is. I mean, wow is it ever.

GRACE

(Walks over to her slowly and tentatively touches her arm, then offers her a seat. They both sit, facing one another. GRACE takes a deep breath then takes KIMBERLY'S hands.) It's okay to tell me, whatever it is.

KIMBERLY

(She takes in another ragged breath as she maintains eye contact with GRACE. She licks her lips before she speaks.) I'm pregnant. With Benny's baby.

GRACE

(GRACE squeezes KIMBERLY 'S hands, then jerks them away. She stands up and begins to pace around the table. She almost whispers, as if to herself.) Pregnant.

KIMBERLY

(Watches GRACE.) My parents are going to be so mad that I'm afraid they're going to kick me out. And I don't know anything about babies. I never even babysat for kids before. It's, like, not something I thought I would ever have to worry about. I mean, dancers don't do this, don't have babies when they're teenagers because it destroys their bodies. I don't know what I was thinking but I didn't think I could get pregnant this easy. *(GRACE continues to pace.)* I don't know what I'm going to do, Grace. Benny is freaked about telling his dad and he wanted us to tell you two together but then he said maybe we should tell you first, maybe you would be more understanding. I know my parents will say I'll have to quit my job and go on welfare and be poor for the rest of my life. They'll be so embarrassed. *(She begins to cry.)*

GRACE

(Stops pacing and looks at the girl. Kimberly's body shakes as she cries. GRACE clasps her hands together and closes her eyes, as if meditating then returns to her seat.) I would be more understanding?

KIMBERLY

(KIMBERLY nods then GRACE sits down and puts her arms around KIMBERLY and rocks her. When GRACE pulls back, KIMBERLY wipes away her own tears then she looks at GRACE.) Will you help me?

GRACE

What kind of help do you need, Kimberly?

KIMBERLY

(Shrugs.) I don't know anything about having a baby or raising children. And Benny says you're the best so I was hoping you could help me.

GRACE

(Brightening.) Benny says I'm the best?

KIMBERLY

Yeah. The best everything. The best cook. The best housekeeper. The best listener. The best kind of mom anyone could hope to have.

GRACE

(Stands up and speaks away from Kimberly.) The best kind of mom anyone could hope to have. . . *(GRACE turns toward KIMBERLY.)* We actually have something in common, you and I. Who would have ever thought I would be here making a meal for a family? Could you go into the kitchen and get the salad, Kimberly?

KIMBERLY

Sure. *(She exits.)*

GRACE

A baby. Benny's baby. And me hardly prepared to be a stepmother. (*KIMBERLY walks in with the salad and puts it on the table.*) All those years of living alone, working every day making accounts balance then going home to the solitude.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes

CONTINUE TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR THE THIRD PLAY IN THE COLLECTION

STRANGER ON THE PORCH

By Beth Dotson Brown

A SHORT PLAY

(At rise: ABBY and KEITH are reading the newspaper on the porch. ABBY looks up from the paper to watch a man, woman and two children walking on the sidewalk.)

ABBY

There they go again. All five of them.

KEITH

I only see four.

ABBY

She's pregnant. In a few months you'll see number five. *(KEITH returns to his paper. ABBY continues to look after them.)* I don't understand. We would have made beautiful babies.

KEITH

(Puts down the newspaper.) What did you say Abby?

ABBY

I said we would have made beautiful babies, you and I.

KEITH

(Smiling at her.) You would have made the most precious babies in the world. It's not like we didn't try.

ABBY

(Still serious.) That's not the point, Keith. Why them and not us? We could give a good home to children. And them, well, just look at them!

KEITH

(KEITH shrugs.) You would have been a wonderful mother, Abby. I'm sorry we couldn't make it happen. Maybe if I hadn't traveled so much during the first 10 years of our marriage. But those days are gone.

ABBY

(Looking wistfully after the family.) I would give anything.

KEITH

I have sales calls to make this week on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, but if I do well maybe we could take off on Thursday to that lake house of your sister's.

ABBY

That would be lovely.

(EMMA LOWERY enters wearing a suit and low-heeled, sensible shoes and carrying a case of some sort. She looks at the house number then addresses them.)

EMMA

Is this the home of Mr. Keith Kanapple?

KEITH

Yes ma'am. What can I do for you?

EMMA

You're him? Mr. Kannapel?

ABBY

He is.

EMMA

You don't look at all as I expected. Or as mother described you. But I supposed it's the distance of years and miles that make it so. *(ABBY and KEITH exchange glances. EMMA puts down her traveling bag and extends a hand, first to Abby then to Keith.)* My name is Emma Lowery. At least that's my given name. But I believe that if my mother had followed custom, she would have named me Emma Kanapple.

KEITH

(Shakes his head and stares.) What are you trying to tell me?

EMMA

That I believe I'm your daughter. *(KEITH stares at the young woman and ABBY straightens, stopping the movement of the porch swing. She first gapes at KEITH then at EMMA.)*

ABBY

You must be, what, 19?

EMMA

Oh, no. I'm 21. Rest assured, Mr. Kanapple was acquainted with my mother before he ever met you. And I don't mean to throw a disturbance into your relationship at all. It's just that . . . *(EMMA looks down demurely at her hands, then to ABBY then KEITH.)* It's just that my mother recently went on to her higher reward and I'm feeling somewhat rootless, having no other siblings, you see. And she always insisted that McGregor Lowery was my father, but the night he left her I heard him call me her bastard child and since then . . .

ABBY

Oh, you poor girl. Please sit down. *(ABBY scoots over to give EMMA space on the porch swing. Emma lightly drops herself onto the swing, barely moving it. Abby starts to put her arm around the girl's shoulders, but she hesitates and doesn't follow through. KEITH watches the two, shaking his head.)* You must miss your mother terribly.

EMMA

Oh, yes. We were such good friends. The best really. So without her, every day is a struggle. That's why I thought that if I could find my father, well, it wouldn't be the same as having Mama back, but it might be something.

KEITH

(Clears his throat.) I'm sorry to have to ask, but could you please tell me your mother's name?

EMMA

Marlene. Marlene Knight of Tupelo, Mississippi.

KEITH

Tupelo. I did work Tupelo and nearby for awhile. *(He counts on his fingers then studies EMMA's face.)*

EMMA

Your name was in her address book from that year, 1952. She got a new one every year and filled them in order, like it was some sort of record of her life, which it sort of is. I didn't see you listed after that.

ABBY

(Scowls at her KEITH then turns lovingly to EMMA.) Do you still live in Tupelo, Emma?

EMMA

Oh, I've been traveling around somewhat, educating myself about the world I guess you could say.

KEITH

How so?

EMMA

(Speaking a very southern, storytelling cadence.) Well, even though I didn't know my real father's family, I was well-acquainted with mother's family – six sisters and one brother. Most of them live in Tupelo still to this day, but Aunt Susie and Aunt Renny both moved to Mobile, Alabama. And the baby, Uncle Jacob, he settled near Memphis. He has a real sweet wife, Melody, who loves it when I come to stay. Unlike my aunts, she didn't grow up with sisters and since she and Uncle Jacob only have boys, at least so far, Melody just loves to have another girl around.

ABBY

That's lovely that you have your family, but it doesn't make up for not having parents, does it? *(EMMA'S eyes dropped to study her shoes and she answered only with silence. She puts her elbows on her knees and drops her face into them, as if crying. ABBY moves closer to encircle the girl with her arm. Quietly)* Have you eaten anything? I could fix you a sandwich now if you're hungry. Or you could join us later for supper. I'm making Keith's favorite, pot roast. *(ABBY glances over at KEITH. He stares blankly at the two women.)*

EMMA

(She sits up slowly, wiping her cheeks dry of any tears she might have shed. She looks at KEITH.) Would you mind very much if I stay for supper?

ABBY

Of course he won't mind, dear.

KEITH

Abby, isn't it time for you to start cooking? My stomach is beginning to growl.

ABBY

(Looks at EMMA as if she's afraid to leave her.) But this is such a good time to get acquainted, for all three of us. *(ABBY smiles at EMMA, appearing to be very happy.)* Tell us more about yourself.

EMMA

Well, I road the bus here. It was a long ride but without a car it was my only option. And as I'm sure you know, the bus station is a fair piece from your home so it was a little walk.

ABBY

But you really wanted to find us.

EMMA

Oh yes, I most certainly did.

KEITH

Abby, could you get me some iced tea. And I'm sure our guest would like some, also.

ABBY

(Still unsure about leaving them.) I'll hurry and be right back. *(ABBY departs and EMMA watches KEITH. She begins to push the swing lightly and its creaking fills the porch.)*

KEITH

I've sold a lot of things to a lot of people during my life. I went door-to-door with encyclopedias, vacuum cleaners and household cleaning products. Every one had some beneficial trait that would make the buyer happy.

EMMA

So you're a salesman?

KEITH

Born that way, I suspect. Sometimes traits are passed on from father to daughter.

EMMA

Sometimes.

KEITH

(Gets up and walks to the far corner of the porch, counting on his fingers again.) What did you say your mother's name was?

EMMA

Marlene Knight.

KEITH

Did she ever call herself Marly?

EMMA

Why yes, she did. Aunt Susie still refers to her as Marly.

KEITH

(Shakes his head in remembrance.) Yes, you do have a family resemblance. And your voice, the way you talk, it's just like her.

EMMA

So you do remember!

KEITH

I remember Marly. I remember a fun-loving, pretty little gal who talked a mile a minute to me about how she knew Hank Williams even before he got famous. That did impress me for some reason. *(He appears to be searching his memory, then speaks as if to himself.)* Marly Knight and I had a baby.

EMMA

You had a baby but now you have a grown daughter.

KEITH

(Speaks in an accusing tone.) Why me? There must be other names in the book that you could check.

EMMA

(Looks hurt.) There are dates. The dates by your name make the most sense. They fit.

KEITH

(Pauses and considers her from across the porch.) What is it that you want, Ms. Lowery? I'm sure you came here for a reason.

EMMA

(Furrowing her brows.) I came to meet my father.

KEITH

What's your birth date, Ms. Lowery?

EMMA

August 27, 1952.

KEITH

(Pacing the porch.) August. My first visit to Tupelo was earlier that year, maybe February. Then I went back in, let me see, I believe it was July. I saw Marly again then – dancing outside at the drive in with some girlfriends. She wore a summer sweater that

KEITH, *Continued*

looked mighty fine on her little figure. (*Turns directly toward EMMA.*) The dates might fit, but either Marly wasn't your mother or you were born later. I saw her in July and her stomach wasn't sheltering a baby. (*EMMA locks eyes with him, as if challenging him to go on.*) I'll ask you again. What is it you want?

EMMA

It works all the time in the story books. Anne of Green Gables. That lost girl that Audrey Hepburn played in Breakfast at Tiffany's. Someone always takes them in and gives them something they've never had before, making their life better and more exciting.

KEITH

What have you never had that you're looking for?

EMMA

(*She drops her eyes to her feet then slowly raises them back to Keith.*) A father.

KEITH

(*KEITH Looks away from her out toward the sidewalk while EMMA gazes at him hopefully. KEITH turns back to her*) How about a mother?

EMMA

Oh, your wife is nice and all, but I don't need her. I learned from my mother that it's the man who holds the wallet.

KEITH

(*Angrily*) You are the worst kind of liar. You're not just trying to get money, you're dealing with hearts here. (*He takes his wallet out of his back pocket, pulls out cash and hands it to her.*) Take this and get out of here. And don't come back. (*ABBY comes back onto the porch with two iced teas.*)

EMMA

(*Snatches the money, folds it in half then stuffs it in her jacket pocket as she stands up.*) I was looking forward to that pot roast.

KEITH

Abby makes a good pot roast, with fresh meat and vegetables, none of that fake stuff they try to sell you in packages in the grocery store. Abby is the real deal on everything. (*EMMA nods, picks up her case then walks past KEITH.*) Maybe you'll learn to be the real deal some day.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes